

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of an inspiring leader, a great visionary, and my friend, Dr. Tom Rivera.

Dr. Tom was born on September 22, 1939, in Colton, California. After graduating from Colton High School, he attended San Bernardino Valley College; California State University, Los Angeles; the University of California, Riverside; and eventually UCLA, where he earned his doctorate in education.

It was at Cal State LA that he met the love of his life, Dr. Lily Rivera, who shared his passion for service. Together, they served in the Peace Corps in Colombia, South America, before marrying in 1965.

In all that he did, Dr. Tom strived to inspire his students to achieve their dreams. As associate dean for undergraduate studies at CSU San Bernardino, he was a pillar of the community. He devoted himself to the empowerment of local youth and maintained leadership roles in organizations including the Kiwanis Club of Greater San Bernardino, LULAC, the Pure Land Foundation, and more.

Dr. Tom was relentless in his advocacy. Even in the face of his own health challenges, he continued his pursuit of a better future where Hispanic youth could achieve their dreams.

In 1984, just 3 years after contracting a virus that left him paralyzed, he helped found the Inland Empire Future Leaders Program, joining forces with fellow educators, Susan Castro, Frank Acosta, Henry Vasquez, and Bill Allison.

Dr. Tom founded the organization to address dropout rates among Hispanic students. His vision was to encourage youth to be proud of their roots and to make a difference in their communities.

All these years later, that vision is fulfilled in the Inland Empire Future Leaders Program's tremendous success. It is fulfilled in the educators, lawyers, doctors, and countless other Inland Empire Future Leaders Program graduates who have gone on to achieve so many great things.

It is fulfilled right here in the Halls of Congress with the gentleman from California (Mr. AGUILAR), my good friend, as Democratic Caucus vice chair, and with me as chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

I stand here because of Dr. Tom. Back in the early years, in 1986, I attended one of IEFLP's leadership trainings at Camp Seeley. That summer left a lasting mark on me and changed the course of my future.

I learned the tools of leadership and returned home, motivated to serve the community. I became the first in Coachella Valley High School to be class president and ASB president all 4 years, and I learned to identify problems that needed to be addressed and to become a part of the solution.

The experience strengthened my dream and my resolve to become a doc-

tor and serve the community. You see, Dr. Tom's guidance fueled in me a passion for social justice, a passion I lived as a pre-med student organizer at UCLA.

It is with Dr. Tom's encouragement that I applied to Harvard Medical School to earn my medical degree and graduate with my master's in public health and my master's in public policy from Harvard University.

I am forever indebted to Dr. Tom for his unyielding devotion to my growth and the success of my peers. He was always there for us. He was always there to motivate us, to celebrate us, and to give us a smile when we needed it most.

He gave us a family, a familia, in which we found reassurance and strength. All IEFLP graduates share a common bond because of him. To this day, when I meet a fellow Inland Empire Future Leaders Program graduate, we reminisce about his kindness and grace.

We said good-bye to Dr. Tom just last month, in March 2022. However, we know that his legacy will live on in each and every one of us. We know that his memory will survive in the hearts of his beloved wife, Dr. Lily; his brother, Ray; his children, Evelyn, Patricia, and Tom; and all of his wonderful grandchildren.

Together, we mourn his passing and celebrate his full life, knowing that he was a good man and an extraordinary public servant whose impact will be felt for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING THE LEGACY OF DR. TOM RIVERA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. AGUILAR) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AGUILAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to follow the words of my good friend, Dr. RAUL RUIZ, as we honor this towering figure from our region, the Inland Empire.

For more than 50 years, Dr. Rivera served our community as an educator, administrator, and community leader. His passing in March was felt by all of us, and it left too large of a void for just one of us to fill.

Back in 1985, our region suffered. More than half of the Latino students in our region didn't finish high school.

While others ignored the problem, Dr. Tom rolled up his sleeves as an elected school board member, as a lifelong educator. He joined with community leaders to form the Inland Empire Future Leaders Program to help these students stay in school.

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As a result, more than 99 percent of the students who go through this program have graduated high school. Ninety percent have gone to college. Dr. Tom's positive influence, his beliefs in what we could become if given the opportunity, helped shape doctors, lawyers, teachers, and, yes, a couple Members of Congress.

Dr. Tom gave working-class kids like me a chance for a better life, for ourselves and for our family, and he taught us that no matter where life takes us, never lose sight of our heritage and our culture, and always give back to our community.

It is a testament to his unwavering faith in our young people that Dr. RAUL RUIZ and I are standing on the House floor today. I was proud to call Dr. Tom a mentor, a friend, and importantly, a constituent. He would always ask me how my grandmother was doing. He went to school on the south side of Colton with members of my family, and he always took the time to ask how they were doing, what they were up to, how he could help them.

My thoughts go out to his wife, Dr. Lily Rivera, his children, and grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, now it is our responsibility, those of us in roles of making policy, those of us in our communities who strive to make our community a better place, it is up to us to carry his legacy forward and to lift up the next generation of Latino leaders.

CONCERNS ABOUT KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to emphasize my concern about President Biden's U.S. Supreme Court nominee, Ketanji Brown Jackson, commonly known as KBJ, and to express my deep disappointment for any Senator that votes for her confirmation this week.

While I do not have a vote on KBJ's confirmation, I do have a voice. And I will continue using my voice to tell the American people the truth.

The truth is that Ketanji Brown Jackson is incapable of holding criminals accountable.

Throughout her career, Judge Jackson's sentences have been drastically lower than the national average, even for individuals who have committed the most egregious crimes imaginable.

When analyzing all criminal case sentencing imposed by U.S. District Courts, Judge Jackson issued significantly lighter sentences, almost 34 percent less than the national average.

Specifically, the statistics reveal a more sinister pattern when broken down to child pornography and child sex torture cases.

When sentencing criminals for possession of child pornography, KBJ imposed sentences 57 percent less than the national average. Additionally, she issued sentences 47 percent less than the national average for those convicted of distributing these atrocious images of child sex torture.

Disturbingly, child sex torture, one of the most heinous crimes of all, is met with compassion and concessions from Judge Jackson.